



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: October 5, 2004

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Creeks Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENTS FOR WATERSHED
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Approve and authorize the Acting Parks and Recreation Director to execute a professional services agreement with Questa Engineering, Inc. in the amount of \$100,000 to prepare existing conditions technical studies for the Arroyo Burro, Mission, and Sycamore Creek watersheds; and,
- B. Approve and authorize the Acting Parks and Recreation Director to execute a professional services agreement with Moore, Iacofano and Goltsman, Inc., in the amount of \$76,470 to facilitate community workshops, produce web page materials, design watershed posters and prepare citizen guides for the Arroyo Burro, Mission, and Sycamore Creek watersheds.

DISCUSSION:

Overview

During the Speaking of Creeks Forum held during Creek Week in October 2002, as well as a number of Creeks Advisory Committee (CAC) work sessions that followed in 2003, community members and the CAC recommended that the Creeks Division develop comprehensive watershed plans. The purpose of a watershed planning effort is to establish a comprehensive long-range strategy for identifying and integrating programs to achieve flood management and protection, storm water and urban runoff pollution reduction, natural habitat protection and enhancement, and passive recreation and open space opportunities. Watershed plans can also provide direction for long-range program and project priorities of the Creeks Division and city-wide efforts to improve creek and ocean water quality, and protect and enhance creek resources.

REVIEWED BY: _____ Finance _____ Attorney

Agenda Item No. _____

In fall 2003, the Creeks Division and the Watershed Planning Subcommittee of the Creeks Advisory Committee (CAC) began outlining potential approaches for developing a watershed planning program. After evaluating other community watershed planning processes, the Creeks Division and the CAC Watershed Planning Subcommittee developed a three-part work program for the three major creeks and watersheds within the City: Arroyo Burro, Mission, and Sycamore. The three elements include: 1) Prepare Baseline Existing Conditions and Constraints Studies, 2) Conduct Community Input and Engagement, and 3) Develop Watershed Action Plans.

Watershed Action Plan Elements

Baseline existing conditions and constraints studies will integrate information on watershed characteristics such as natural resources, creek hydrology, water quality, cultural resources, urban infrastructure management, land use, and jurisdictional polices, among others. The existing conditions analysis will build from existing policy documents, research studies, and technical documents. It will analyze how historical activities, including land development, have contributed to current conditions, and identify any critical information gaps. It will also look at how potential future land use planning and urban development patterns will affect the protection and enhancement of watershed resources.

The second component of the watershed planning process is an active and multi-phased community input and engagement program that begins during the development of the existing conditions studies and continues throughout the watershed planning process. In the first phase, meetings with residents, business owners, community organizations, and others, will be held in each watershed to identify key issues, concerns and interests. It is anticipated that community input gathered during these meetings will help focus and direct the existing conditions studies. Similar to the existing conditions studies, the community input and engagement program will build from three years of community outreach conducted by the Creeks Division as well as other important community efforts such as the Arroyo Burro Watershed Vision Project. Since through such efforts many Santa Barbara residents are already engaged in creek and water quality issues, it is anticipated that the community workshops will be very productive. A second phase of community engagement will occur once the existing conditions studies are complete. The objective of the second phase is to develop community goals, objectives and priorities for the watershed action plans.

Both the existing conditions studies and the community priorities will then be used to develop watershed action plans with specific goals, objectives and implementation steps. Such steps will take into consideration the opportunities and constraints within each watershed as well as the roles and participation of Santa Barbara residents, businesses, community organizations, and city and county public agencies. It is anticipated that the watershed action plans will assist the Creeks Division in selecting methods for addressing pollution reduction and resource enhancement, prioritizing projects for implementation,

and allocating resources over the long term. The watershed action plans will also be consistent with the requirements of the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Storm Water Management Program

Scope of Work for Existing Conditions Studies and Community Engagement

To move forward with developing watershed action plans for the Arroyo Burro, Mission, and Sycamore Creek watersheds, the Creeks Division released a Request-for-Proposal (RFP) in May 2004. The RFP was sent to 17 firms throughout California that specialize in environmental planning. Four responses were received and all 4 firms were interviewed. Based on the responses to the RFP and interviews, the Creeks Division is recommending that Questa Engineering, Inc. (Questa) prepare the existing conditions technical studies. Questa was determined to be the most qualified because the firm has prepared a number of watershed management and resource studies, and has a diverse staff team with expertise in hydrology, biology, and geology, as well as land use planning and water quality engineering. The scope of work includes analyzing and integrating existing plans, policies and data on each watershed, evaluating existing conditions, determining any data gaps, developing an integrated GIS and maps, and preparing detailed technical reports that will provide the baseline information for the watershed action plans.

The Creeks Division is also recommending that Moore, Iacofano and Goltsman, Inc. (MIG) provide community outreach services during the development of the existing conditions studies. MIG, who also submitted a response to the RFP, specializes in community outreach and consensus building around environmental and community development issues. MIG has facilitated community stakeholder groups and developed outreach materials for a number of river master plans in California, including the Napa River, San Gabriel River, and Russian River, among others. The scope of work for community outreach includes conducting three facilitated community outreach meetings, with one in each watershed, providing web support to post meeting and project materials, and preparing outreach materials including watershed information posters to be placed in public areas as well as three citizen watershed guides, one for each watershed.

Watershed Technical Advisory Group

An informal technical advisory group has been formed to assist in the development of the watershed action plans. The primary members of the group include Creeks Division and Planning Division staff, CAC Watershed Planning Subcommittee members, County of Santa Barbara Project Clean Water and Flood Control staff, and a representative of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project. The technical advisory group will meet as needed to work with Questa and MIG, and review project deliverables. The Creeks Advisory Committee will be updated regularly on the progress of the project. In addition to working closely with the County of Santa Barbara, it is anticipated that as the project moves forward, state and federal public agencies that regulate surface water, sensitive

species, riparian habitats, and coastal areas will be asked to review project outcomes and provide technical assistance for the watershed action plans.

Project Timeline

Both the existing conditions studies and initial community outreach efforts will be undertaken over an 8 month period, from October 2004 to June 2005. The community outreach meetings will be held in late October and early November. The Creeks Division will return to Council with the project results prior to moving forward with the second phase of community input and engagement, and the development of the watershed action plans. It is anticipated that the watershed action plans would be completed in 18-24 months.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

The Creeks Capital Program includes \$450,000 for the purpose of developing watershed plans. Of these funds, \$150,000 was appropriated in Fiscal Year 2003 and \$300,000 was appropriated in Fiscal Year 2004. The proposed contract with Questa to prepare the existing conditions studies for 3 watersheds is \$100,000 and the proposed contract with MIG to undertake the community outreach program in 3 watersheds is \$76,470. With the completion of these projects, \$273,530 would remain in the Creeks Capital Program for additional community outreach and the completion of Arroyo Burro, Mission, and Sycamore Creek Watershed Action Plans.

PREPARED BY: Jill E. Zachary, Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Acting Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office